

Finding Living Danish Relatives

How successful you are in finding living Danish relatives will depend on a number of things:

- ♥ How many generations have elapsed since your ancestors emigrated (25 years = approx. 1 generation in the US; 30 years = approx. 1 generation in Denmark);
- ♥ Whether your ancestors lived in a rural parish, a market town, or in Copenhagen;
- ♥ Their surname and how common it is/was;
- ♥ How many siblings they had, whether these stayed in the same locality or not, or whether they too emigrated from Denmark; and, sometimes --
- ♥ Just plain luck!

If a number of generations have passed since your ancestors emigrated, you need to trace the relatives who stayed in Denmark as far forward in time as possible, using census records, church registers, and probate documents.

Do you have any clues as to names, addresses and dates from family records, photographs or correspondence? If so, add this information to your family tree and make a timeline.

Once you've done the above, the following are some sources or strategies for finding or identifying living relatives:

1. Local archives in the area where the family last lived (www.danskearkiver.dk/); click on 'Arkivvejviser' to find an archive in that locality (listed by current administrative breakdowns of regions (*regioner*) and municipalities (*kommuner*). Local Danish genealogical societies may also be helpful.
2. Place a query on the webpage of the Association of Danish Genealogists (www.slaegtogdata.dk/forum). An English-language guide to using the site may be found at (www.slaegtogdata.dk/andet/forum-help-english). You will need to register and have a password. Queries may be written in English, but being concise and organized when putting up information is recommended.
3. For rural areas and small towns, write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper (try **Avisoversigten** at www.avisoversigten.dk/ to find names and contact information for newspapers).
4. If you have fairly recent information, i.e. names and addresses and dates of birth of people born since 1920, try contacting *Folkeregistret* (the Public Registration Office) at their last-known residence; for example, you might Google 'Folkeregistret' + 'Herning' to find the address of that office in the city of Herning. (Due to the recent consolidation of municipalities and ensuing municipal name changes this can be a bit tricky. All Danes have a national registration number that tracks them throughout their lives.)
5. Google ["name of ancestor/relative"] [location] and see if anything interesting pops up. Results will often be Danish-language websites, but you may find a site run by a genealogically-minded collateral relative.
6. Try online Danish telephone directories at Infobel.dk (www.infobel.com/en/denmark) or Krak (www.krak.dk/).
7. Facebook users will find many Danish and Danish-American genealogy sites where queries can be placed.
8. Contact the Family History & Genealogy Center. Perhaps one of your relatives is looking for YOU! (genealogy@danishmuseum.org or www.danishmuseum.org).
9. And if you wish to visit Denmark www.visitdenmark.com/usa/en-us/menu/turist/turistforside.htm is a good place to get all sorts of information.